

R 090135Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9036
INFO AMEMBASSY DHAKA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMCONSUL CHENNAI
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL MUMBAI
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC

UNCLAS COLOMBO 001118

DELHI FOR FAS
DEPT FOR SCA/INS, EEB/TPP MLURIE AND JSPECK
USAID FOR BHAMMINK
USDA FOR KMILLER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [TBIO](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKA LIKELY SUPPORTIVE OF PROPOSED GLOBAL
PARTNERSHIP FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD (GPAF)

REF: STATE 123480

¶1. Econ Chief delivered reftel points to Additional Secretary for Agriculture Development and Agrarian Services AAR Ratnayake on December 8. Although Ratnayake could not pledge full GSL support for the Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food (GPAF), she stated Sri Lanka would be in favor of the initiative and noted the GSL could benefit from increased information sharing and technical assistance. She also encouraged additional direct U.S. assistance to improve agricultural output in country.

¶2. Ratnayake underscored that Sri Lanka is very interested in food security. The government has a long-term plan that is working to help farmers improve yields on twenty-three food commodities, most notably rice. The goal is to cease all importation of these products by 2010. This goal will not be met, with the possible exception of rice, due to low productivity. Although the Ministry is active in advanced research, the extension of this research to farmers remains weak.

¶3. In discussing cross-border cooperation, Ratnayake noted that GSL agriculture officials meet regularly with South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) counterparts to share research, information, and lessons learned. GPAF should consider including regional organizations in its framework to maximize linkages that already exist.

Blake